

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T ATHENS 6781

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, GR, CY, TU
SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S ORAL MESSAGE TO BITSIOS

REF: STATE 166402

1. I RECEIVED REFTEL CONTAINING THE SECRETARY'S ORAL MESSAGE TO BITSIOS CONCERNING THE TURKISH SEISMIC VESSEL AND CYPRUS ON SUNDAY MORNING JUST AS BITSIOS WAS DEPARTING GREECE ON AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO AUSTRIA. I WAS UNABLE TO GET IN TOUCH WITH BITSIOS BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE BUT DID MANAGE TO TALK AT MIDDAY SUNDAY TO COORDINATION MINISTER PAPALIGOURAS WHO HAD BEEN ACTING PRIME MINISTER DURING CARAMANLIS' TEMPORARY ABSENCE IN PARIS. WITHOUT REFERRING SPECIFICALLY TO THE SECRETARY'S MESSAGE TO BITSIOS (REFTEL) I DID INDICATE THAT I HAD HEARD FROM THE SECRETARY CONCERNING HIS MEETING WITH PAPALIGOURAS IN PARIS AND I REFLECTED IN MY CONVERSATION WITH PAPALIGOURAS THE ESSENCE OF OUR POSITION AS CONTAINED IN PARAS TWO AND THREE OF REFTEL. PAPALIGOURAS AGREED THAT AN EXACERBATION OF THE SITUATION IN THE AEGEAN WOULD NOT BENEFIT EITHER SIDE AND SAID THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT VERY MUCH WANTED TO AVOID ANY CONFRONTATION WITH TURKEY ON THIS ISSUE. HOWEVER, HE ADDED, THE PROBLEM WAS IN ANKARA, NOT IN ATHENS, BECAUSE IT WAS THE TURKS THAT WOULD BE INITIATING THE CONFRONTATION IF THEY SEND THEIR VESSEL TO A DISPUTED

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AREA.

2. SINCE TALKING TO PAPALIGOURAS SUNDAY, I ALSO SAW HIM AGAIN AND MANY OTHER TOP GOG MILITARY AND CIVILIAN OFFICIALS AT OUR BICENTENNIAL RECEPTION YESTERDAY AND REMADE THE PRINCIPAL POINTS IN REFTEL. I AM ALSO SEEING PAPALIGOURAS TONIGHT AT A DINNER I AM HAVING IN HIS HONOR, AT WHICH ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER STAVROPOULOS WILL BE PRESENT, AND I WILL PURSUE THIS LINE, INDICATING ALSO THAT AMBASSADOR MACOMBER WILL BE REINFORCING EARLIER APPROACHES WE HAVE MADE ON THIS SUBJECT IN ANKARA.

3. BITSIOS IS DUE BACK IN ATHENS FROM VIENNA TOMORROW AFTERNOON (WEDNESDAY) AND I SHALL SEE HIM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THEREAFTER TO DELIVER THE SECRETARY'S SPECIFIC ORAL MESSAGE AS CONTAINED REFTEL. IN THAT CONNECTION, I AM SOMEWHAT PUZZLED BY PARAGRAPH FOUR OF REFTEL IN WHICH THE SECRETARY INDICATES HE HAS DEFERRED APPROACHING THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT PENDING AN INDICATION FROM BITSIOS OF GREECE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD AN EXCHANGE OF "INITIAL POSITION," TERRITORIAL MAPS THROUGH WALDHEIM. AS REPORTED IN ATHENS 5926, I HAVE ALREADY DISCUSSED THIS SUBJECT WITH BITSIOS AND IN PARAGRAPH THREE OF THAT MESSAGE REPORTED BITSIOS' REACTION, NAMELY, THAT HE CONCURRED IN THE SECRETARY MAKING AN APPROACH TO CAGLAYANGIL ON THIS SUBJECT IF HE WISHED TO DO SO. I AM SURE THAT BITSIOS WILL THINK THAT HE HAS ALREADY EXPRESSED A POSITIVE REACTION TO THE SECRETARY ON THIS POINT AND THEREFORE, UNLESS INSTRUCTED OTHERWISE IN THE MEANTIME, WILL OMIT PARAGRAPH FOUR IN REFTEL WHEN I CONVEY THIS NEW ORAL MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY TO BITSIOS. (PERHAPS THE MISUNDERSTANDING IS DUE TO BITSIOS' EARLIER OFFER TO CONVEY TO THE SECRETARY ANY INFORMATION HE RECEIVED FROM THE GREEK CYPRIOTS REPEAT GREEK CYPRIOTS CONCERNING THEIR RESPONSE TO WALDHEIM ON THE SAME PROPOSAL--INFORMATION THAT JOHN TZOUNIS TOLD ME LAST WEEK BITSIOS HAD NOT YET RECEIVED.)
KUBISCH

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